

We all went in a hackney coach to the office, where I found that the articles were presented by a Mr. Bennett, residing in some street in Westminster, and an acquaintance of the O'Connells. We were soon dismissed, but I am now bound to keep the peace in £500 sureties. As far as the present affair was concerned, it was a most -unnecessary precaution, as if all the O'Connells were to challenge me I could not think of meeting them *now*. I consider and every one else that they are lynched. It is very easy for you to criticise, but I do not regret the letter: the expressions were well weighed, and without it the affair was but clever pamphleteering. Critics you must always meet. W. told me the last letter was the finest thing in the English language, but that the letter to Dan was *too long*; others think that perfect. One does not like the Yahoo as coarse, others think it worthy of Swift, and so on. . . . The general effect is the thing, and that is, that all men agree I have shown pluck.¹

His father and sister had been much alarmed by the ferocity and vindictiveness of the second letter to Morgan O'Connell, and perhaps Disraeli himself may in calmer moments have suspected that his violence had been excessive.

I have no ambition [he wrote² to the electors of Taunton] to be considered either ferocious or vindictive. . . . I am, I believe, of a mild and tolerant disposition, not too easily-nettled, and quite ready to subscribe to a considerable latitude in the gladiatorial encounter between political opponents. . . . If in those hot and hurried letters I indulged in expressions which my calmer reason may disapprove, I am sure no candid and generous spirit, whatever may be his party, would scan with severity the words of one who had been subjected, without the prospect of redress, to such unparalleled outrage; I am sure no candid and generous spirit but must sympathise with one, who young, alone, supported only by his own energies, and the inspiration of a good cause, dared to encounter, in no inglorious struggle, the most powerful individual in the world who does not wear a crown.

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The general effect, however, was the thing, and judged by this test the result was not unsatisfactory. ' Row with O'Connell in which I greatly distinguish myself i

¹ *betters*, p. 94. ² Address of May 12.